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RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI 0325
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RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 0102
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1576
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0943
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN 0108
RUEHHE/AMEMBASSY HELSINKI 0903
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0824
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0547
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 0214
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1449
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 3550
RUEHYN/AMEMBASSY SANAA 0032
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2020
RUEHBAD/AMCONSUL PERTH 0448
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 003180

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DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS
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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [KISL](#) [PREL](#) [ID](#)
SUBJECT: NATIONAL LEGISLATURE FLEXES MUSCLES ON
AMBASSADORIAL PICKS

REF: A. JAKARTA 3145

[1](#)B. JAKARTA 2846

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Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4(b,d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Indonesia's national legislature (DPR) is pressing the GOI to explain several of its recent ambassadorial nominees. Legislators are--in particular--criticizing picks for Kuala Lumpur, London and New Delhi, asserting that they are either not competent or are corrupt. The Chair of the DPR's foreign affairs committee told Pol/C that he also wants to block the government's pick for Burma because of the regime's brutal crackdown. The DPR--by placing such roadblocks--continues to show its willingness to spar with the executive branch. END SUMMARY.

EXPLAIN YOURSELF!

[1](#)2. (SBU) Indonesia's national legislature continues to cause problems for the government in the international relations area. On November 12, the DPR's Commission I on Foreign Affairs met and discussed 14 GOI selections for ambassadorial assignments (see list in para 8). Legislators present at the session--nominees were not there--blasted several of the government's picks. Coming up for particular scrutiny were the selections for India (Andi Ghalib), Malaysia (Dai Bachtiar), and the United Kingdom (Sugiharto--one name only).

[1](#)3. (C) Yusron Ihza Mahendra, one of the Commission's Deputy

Chairs, asserted that the three were either "not competent or were corrupt" and the government should consider withdrawing the nominations. He went on to declare: "Explain yourself, President Yudhoyono, on why you want these people to represent Indonesia." (Note: Ghalib and Bachtiar have somewhat controversial reputations tinged with allegations of corruption. Sugiharto apparently has a clean reputation.)

14. (C) The nominees are scheduled to have their confirmation hearings--referred to as "fit and proper tests" in the DPR's nomenclature--beginning on November 26. Harry Purwanto, the head of the North America Office at the Department of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU), told Pol/C that the nominees "are expecting a great deal of questioning" at the session. (Note: Purwanto--a close Mission contact--is the nominee for Finland; his nomination is not controversial.)
PROBLEMATIC POL APPOINTEES

15. (C) The major focus of committee member frustration concerns the political appointees on the list. Ghalib, the nominee for India, is a former attorney general and a former general. Bachtiar is a former police official and Sugiharto a former Minister for State Enterprises. In total, five of the 14 appointees are non-career diplomats. In a November 15 conversation, Theo Sambuaga, the Chair of Commission I, told Pol/C that he and his colleagues "were simply not happy with the credentials of the political appointees; countries like India, Malaysia and the UK are very important and need the best envoys." Sambuaga added that he generally had no problems with the career diplomats on the list.

BLOCKING BURMA PICK?

16. (C) The one problematic exception among the career diplomats is the choice for Burma, Sebastianus Sumarsono. As he has before (see Ref b), Sambuaga told Pol/C that "there is

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no way that Indonesia should be sending an envoy to Myanmar at this time." Sambuaga--who has been vociferous in his criticism of the Burmese regime and its brutal crackdown--said he had told the government this, but had not received a response. He planned to work with his colleagues on Commission I and the legislators who are members of the Myanmar Caucus to try to block the appointment.
FLEXING MUSCLES

17. (C) As reviewed in Ref A, the DPR is increasingly beginning to assert itself in Indonesia's nascent democracy and Mission has ramped up its outreach to the legislative branch as a result. The DPR clearly wants to be seen as a force to reckoned with in international relations. In placing roadblocks in such areas as diplomatic appointments, the DPR is showing that it is more than willing to spar with the executive branch, which throughout most of Indonesia's history has had total control of the foreign policy portfolio.

NOMINEES

18. (U) A list of the government's nominees for ambassadorial appointments follows:

Burma -- Sebastianus Sumarsono
Colombia -- Michael Manufandu
Denmark -- Abdurrachman Saleh
Finland -- Herry Purwanto
Greece -- Hamid Awaluddin
India -- Andi Ghalib
Kenya -- Budi Bowo Leksono
Malaysia -- Dai Bachtiar
Russian Federation -- Yuri Thamrin
Sri Lanka -- Jaffar Hussein
UAE -- Wahid Suprihadi
United Kingdom -- Sugiharto (one name only)
Yemen -- Noval Aulia

Vietnam -- Pitono Purmono

HUME